



DIVISION OF DISABILITY AND ELDER SERVICES

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Date: June 28, 2004

To: State-wide Crisis Intervention Network Subcommittee

From George Hulick, Bureau of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Re: Crisis Intervention and 51.15s Best Practice Proposal

During the past year the State-wide Crisis Intervention Network identified and discussed an issue concerning the wide variability in which emergency detentions (51.15s) are conducted throughout the state. The group identified several counties where there was close cooperation between the crisis staff/program and law enforcement. Where this cooperation exists it clearly benefits all concerned; law enforcement has access to clinical expertise to help with the assessment of mental illness and dangerousness, clinical staff and the consumer are supported by law enforcement, and the individual who is subject to being detained receives the best level of care. This proposal has been adopted by the membership of the State-wide Crisis Intervention Network. The proposal was also formally supported by the Wisconsin Counties Human Service Association (WCHSA), Behavioral Health Policy Advisory Committee, at their meeting on August 22, 2003.

The State-wide Crisis Intervention Network Subcommittee comprised of law enforcement officials and human service representatives has developed the attached proposals regarding best practice concerning crisis intervention and emergency detentions (51.15s). The best practice proposal was developed with the intent of encouraging law enforcement and crisis programs to work together in a more consistent manner across the state. This proposal suggests that law enforcement and crisis staff develop a working relationship that allows for interaction between them when an emergency detention is being considered. Our joint vision is that this "Best Practice" proposal be used to initiate a dialogue between the crisis program and local law enforcement that would result in establishing collaborative guidelines for responding to persons who are experiencing a mental health crisis which may or may not lead to an emergency detention.

This "Best Practice Proposal" has been endorsed by the Badger State Sheriffs Association and the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association. We also recommend that all Wisconsin Counties adopt and endorse the "Best Practice Proposal." This basic level of collaboration between law enforcement and human services should be available in all counties to the extent that resources and capacity permit.